

D1 a base sheet attached to one of said elastic ear tabs and stemlike projections extending from said base sheet, said stemlike projections of said mechanical fastener being releasably engaged with said one elastic ear tab to protect said hook material of said mechanical fastener before said disposable absorbent article is packaged [handled by a user].

D2 43. (Twice Amended) The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim [36] 35 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said one elastic ear tab to provide a peel strength of at least about 20 grams.

44. (Twice Amended) The package of disposable absorbent articles according to claim [36] 35 wherein said stemlike projections are releasably engaged with said one elastic ear tab to provide a peel strength of from about 30 to about 90 grams.

D3 48. (Once Amended) A package of disposable absorbent articles comprising a plurality of said disposable absorbent articles wherein each of said disposable absorbent articles includes an outer cover, a bodyside liner, an absorbent core disposed between said outer cover and said bodyside liner, and at least one hook-and-loop type mechanical fastener which comprises a hook material which includes a base sheet and stemlike projections extending from said base sheet, said stemlike projections being releasably engaged with said disposable absorbent article to protect said hook material and provide a pant-like structure before said disposable absorbent article is [handled by a user] packaged.

### Remarks

Claims 35, 43, 44, 48 and 50-57 were pending in the instant application. Claims 43 and 44 have been amended to correctly depend from claim 35. Claim 35 has been amended to recite that the stemlike projections of the hook material are releasably engaged with the elastic ear tab to protect the hook material before the disposable absorbent article is packaged. Claim 48 has been amended to recite that the stemlike projections of the hook material are releasably engaged with the disposable